

**WASHINGTON, DC--** U.S. Congressman Peter DeFazio (D-Springfield) responded to the United States Postal Service's (USPS) announcement that they will move forward on a plan to close processing facilities, including the Springfield-Gateway, Bend, Pendleton, and Salem processing centers.

Following are DeFazio's remarks:

"Congress must work together and pass legislation that will sustain the postal service, avert unnecessary closures that hurt rural communities, and save American jobs. I will continue to fight for HR 3591, the Postal Service Protection Act, and HR 3592, the Protecting Rural Post Office Act, legislation I introduced to help solve the serious financial issues facing the USPS while protecting postal service in rural communities.

But today's announcement by the Postmaster General to move forward with the closures of hundreds of mail distribution centers, including four in Oregon, is outrageous. These closures are based on questionable data that the USPS admits doesn't address long term solvency. Time and again the Postmaster General has failed to listen to the concerns of hundreds of thousands of individuals and small businesses that rely on USPS. He has also ignored alternative solutions offered by Congress to avoid such drastic measures. I find it stunning he is moving forward with a short-sighted proposal that fails to address serious long-term financial issues facing USPS and will ultimately lead to the end of the Postal Service and universal postal delivery in this country."

### *BACKGROUND ON DEFAZIO'S LEGISLATION*

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### **HR 3591, Postal Service Protection Act**

- Companion legislation was introduced in the Senate by Senator Bernie Sanders (I-VT)
- The bill fixes the immediate fiscal problems faced by USPS by allowing them to recover overpayments made to its pension plans. Estimates show that the Postal Service has overpaid by anywhere from \$7 to 50 billion.
- The bill eliminates the required \$5 billion a year pre-funding of future retiree health benefits.
- The bill prevents closure of rural post offices by giving the Postal Regulatory Commission (PRG) binding authority to prevent closures based on the effect on the community and on employees; not just profit. Currently the PRG only acts in an advisory role.
- The bill requires strict delivery standards for 1<sup>st</sup> class mail delivery that would make it more difficult to close area mail processing centers.
- The bill would statutorily require 6 day delivery.
- The bill establishes new ways for USPS to generate revenue by providing non-postal services like new media services, issuance of licenses, shipment of beer and wine and shifting more toward electronic mail.

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### **HR 3592, Protecting Rural Post Office Act**

- Companion legislation was introduced in the Senate by Senator Jeff Merkley (D-OR)

- The bill precludes USPS from closing any post office which results in more than 10 miles between any 2 post offices.

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